

**Incorporating Storytelling as a Tool/Medium to Enhance Comprehension Skills of K-3
English Language Learners.**

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Abstract

The educational value of storytelling can never be underestimated. Likewise, there is a growing trend about using storytelling as an instructional tool and its use with English language learners is not a new phenomenon. In addition, educators share a school of thought that storytelling in the classroom is a way to get students actively involved in their learning. Numerous published researches revealed the seamless relationship between storytelling and comprehension. Simultaneously, studies propose the positive impact storytelling has on English language learners. There is power in any story, whether long or short, whether in-person or delivered digitally, whether a retold story or a unique personal story, a story can be powerful. In education, “storytelling allows the teacher to provide instruction indirectly” (Collins & Cooper, 2005). “It is easy to embed teaching lessons, information, and mental processes in story form” (Collins & Cooper, 2005). While storytelling is not a magic panacea, we find it helps our students improve their understanding and retention of the material. This thesis presents storytelling being incorporated as a tool to improve comprehension skills of English language learners. In addition, the thesis provides potent published literature sanctioning the use of storytelling as an instructional tool. Additionally, the coherent relationship between storytelling and comprehension is reviewed and the benefits to English language learners. The thesis provides a handbook which will concretize the use of storytelling through lesson plans and other activities. In addition, it will help to clarify any misapprehension related to the effects of storytelling on developing comprehension skills of English language learners.

Dedication

I dedicate my thesis to my parents, sibling, nieces, nephews, and many friends. A special feeling of gratitude to my friends Samantha and Marie whose words of encouragement inspired me daily. I dedicate this thesis to my nephew who aspires to excel academically and during my study, time spent with him was limited. I hope this will help to lead him along the path of success and provide a positive outlook on education. I also dedicate this thesis to my prayer family who have supported me throughout the process.

Acknowledgement

I would like to acknowledge Dr. Michelle Plaisance, my advisor for her patience, tolerance understanding, supervision and support about research and academic writing which positively helped me effectively complete this research. I wish to express gratitude to the online tutors and friends who facilitated typing, editing, and proofreading. Finally, a big thank you to all, this process would be impossible without your unwavering support.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Dedication.....	iii
Acknowledgement.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
Chapter One: Introduction.....	1
Chapter Two: Review of Literature.....	3
Chapter Three: Project Design.....	9
Chapter Four: The Project.....	13
Conclusion.....	24
Appendix A: Workbook.....	27
Appendix B: Slides.....	29
References.....	69

Chapter One: Introduction

Teaching becomes an exciting career path when one can experience different grade levels and when it is a passion. Being in this noble profession for over 20 years, serving as a classroom teacher and administrator I have found that this is a remarkable experience and drives me to be an agent of change. Transitioning from the role of an administrator in Jamaica to a second-grade classroom teacher in the United States was a positive experience. The process could be viewed as a demotion; however, the journey has been rewarding and has provided me with a wealth of knowledge. As a global educator, one of my responsibilities has been to teach students whose native language was not English. I approached the task with an open mind and sought to learn about the students and their home languages. Due to this approach, I was able to create a bond with the English Language learners and became an active part of their learning experience.

As I taught the required curriculum daily, I realized that the ELL's had a great interest in learning but were faced with challenges understanding the content and the language. In an attempt to address my ELL's needs, I started reading scholarly articles related to addressing the learning deficit of ELL students. The readings revealed that making a connection with the students' cultures would play a pivotal role in addressing the challenges. Secondly, I observed that during reading blocks, when I read stories to my students, their attention was focused and their level of performance in completing activities was satisfying. As I continued using stories in the language block, I realized that there was a vast improvement in students' comprehension, and increased participation was evident. Fortunately, during the summer, I furthered my education by taking an elective focused on stories that provided an in-depth understanding of theories and strategies aligned to stories in the teaching and learning process. This was an eye-opener for me and brought back some

memories of my own childhood experiences. Storytelling is a vital part of my home country's cultural practices and has seamless connection with practical learning.

This project provides teachers with a useful guide in using storytelling to enhance comprehension skills of young English Language Learners. Suggested stories from different cultures will be embedded in lesson plans and made available. Engaging in storytelling activities is a way to motivate even the most reluctant reader or writer. Storytelling is defined as “relating a tale to one or more listeners through voice and gesture” (National Council of Teachers of English, 1992, p. 1). Since storytelling relies on both the listener and the teller, this strategy utilizes a language's social element. Researchers have found that literacy instruction is most effective when developed through social interaction and collaboration with others (Dugan, 1997). An observation I have made when using stories with a student is that they can always make a connection between the stories and their family or friends, which creates meaningful discussion. To successfully implement and complete this capstone projects, it is imperative to analyze scholarly articles that include primary and secondary sources related to storytelling being an effective tool to improve comprehension skills. As I orchestrate this project, it is my desire to provide educators with a detailed plan to effectively incorporate storytelling into their teaching process to improve the comprehension skills of K- 2 learners.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

Introduction

In this chapter, I review literature associated with using storytelling to improve the comprehension skills of K-3 English language learners (ELLs). Initially, I review the relevance of this research for teachers and learners of English as a second language. Secondly, I discuss storytelling and its implementation in the teaching and learning settings for ELLs. Finally, I examine the benefits of storytelling for students and its relationship with comprehension.

The population of English Language Learner (ELL) students in the United States is on a steady increasing and is one of the most rapidly growing populations in U.S. schools (Calderon, Slavin & Sanchez, 2011). The U.S Department of Education requires all public schools to provide extra support for ELL Students yet English language learners in elementary classroom struggle with literacy as they practice the skills needed for reading in a second language (Hickman, Pollard- Durodola, & Vaughn, 2004). Elementary teachers face challenges as they sift through the best reading strategies to use with elementary ELL students. To be effective, reading strategies used with ELL students can extract meaning while decoding (Calderon, Slavin & Sanchez, 2011).

According to the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE, 1992), storytelling provides elementary students the opportunity to listen, retell and even act out stories, all of which are important components of comprehension. When using storytelling, comprehension can also be reinforced through activities such as learning story structure, the ability to visualize, learning new vocabularies and relating ideas to their own lives and the world.

The student or participant can make connections to other stories when actively engaging in comprehension. Storytelling does not always include pictures or other visual

props, as a result the listeners must use both the left and right side of the brain to process what they are hearing (Woodward, 2002). Likewise, when children listen to stories, they develop a sense of structure that helps them to understand more complex literature (Pedersen, 1995). Storytelling has always been used with children in the earlier grades, but there is now evidence to indicate that it is being used as a teaching Tool (Abrahamson, 1998). In addition, Abrahamson asserted that storytelling is the base on which education stands. Storytelling is claimed to be a powerful and effective tool in teaching language acquisition (Honeygan, 2000). When children are listening to stories, they are developing skills that will prepare them for more complex literature. In addition, storytelling can be used as an effective means to increase early literacy and promote reading comprehension skills (Haven & Ducey, 2007).

Storytelling

Storytelling is not a new process and has been around for an extended period. It was the principle way of telling and recording history. Storytelling is relating a tale to one or more listeners through voice and gestures, providing an immediate interaction between the teller and listener (NCTE, 1992). It is a method by which imagination can be stimulated and in turn leads to student's responses which are of a higher cognitive level (Aix, 1988). In a study conducted by Phillips (n.d.), he stated that vocabulary, comprehension, and oral language were more advanced in children who are continuously exposed to various stories. Not only can storytelling be linked to language literacy and development, it is also important to other areas of learning. As cited in an article by Speaker (2000), there is an increase in attention span, listening skills, accuracy of recall, and improvement in sequencing ability of children exposed to storytelling on a regular basis. Many studies have been done on storytelling and its effect on learning, particularly in language literacy. In one study, to

provide a basis for implementing storytelling in the classroom Speaker, Taylor, and Kamen (2004) assessed changes in verbal fluency in a group of preschool children. This study analyzed each child's language ability before and after multiple sessions of a storytelling program (Speaker, Taylor, and Kamen ,2004) The results concluded that each child within this group improved language skills when storytelling was implemented in the curriculum (Speaker, Taylor, and Kamen ,2004) . Though each child's language development grew at different rates, each child made growth in his/her overall expressive language acquisition and by extension comprehension (Speaker, Taylor, and Kamen ,2004) .

This research strongly supports the use of storytelling as part of the curriculum for every child. In education, stories have come in the form of written texts, oral narration, and instructional media. They can be presented as role-playing and simulations. Nevertheless, Caruthers (2008) defined storytelling among educational researchers is often defined on more narrow or specific terms.

The National Council of Teachers of English (2005) defined storytelling as the relating of a tale to one or more listeners, and they emphasized that it is not congruent with simply acting out a drama or reciting a story from memory or a text, but it is the creation of mental images of the elements of a story through voice and gesture to an audience. And, through the telling of a story, the teller and the audience give complete attention and engage in a learning experience.

Storytelling in the classroom

Storytelling can be a powerful and useful tool in instructional methods. According to Neuburger (2012),

Children have bits of stories floating around inside their heads: tales of dropped ice cream cones and flocks of birds plotting their route across the sky, time-traveling

cars, and chipmunks setting up tidy homes inside tunnels. They might be simple stories that stem from the day or more complex fantasies born of hours of contemplation. These pieces of narrative, the stories on the inside, can be explored, and with just a bit of planning and lots of joyful intention, they can become the stories on the outside. p. 11.

Children are like sponges, absorbing what they see, hear, and learn, but they also can contribute to storytelling as well. As Neuburger (2012) explained, “Storytelling is the perfect, most nourishing food for growing minds. When you think about what you remember of the concepts and lessons you have learned in life, the ones that come to mind tend to be attached to stories. This is because they engaged your mind and helped you make sense of the world” (\ p. 11).

Hamilton and Weiss (1990) have been forerunners in this field, advocating storytelling in the classroom not only for teachers but for students as well and acknowledged that teachers provide important models to the students. MacDonald (1993) assisted teachers by making storytelling accessible and easy to do. As MacDonald said, “Storytelling teaches listening. It models fine use of oral language, models plot, sequencing, characterization, and the many literary devices you want to convey. There is no better educational tool to teach language-arts skills” (p. 43).

Storytelling serves multiple functions in the classroom. Gallets (2005) clarified that storytelling acts as a bridge for diverse literacy needs by providing a context for literacy, helping learners develop their ideas, and preparing them for reading comprehension and later academic success. Smith (1988) asserts that the human brain is essentially a narrative device, it runs on stories. Likewise, Gere (2002) asserted that the knowledge that we store in the brain, our “theory of the world,” is largely in the form of stories. Stories are far more easily remembered and recalled than sequences of unrelated facts (p. 178)

Teaching through storytelling dates back thousands of years (Kosa, 2008). According to Coulter, Michael, and Poyner (2007) and Sanchez (2005), storytelling offers much more than casual entertainment within academic settings. Instead, Woodward (2002) posited that storytelling is a tool helps students understand the world around them. Additionally, it enables students to visualize themselves in similar situations as the characters of the story (Combs & Beach, 1994) and see the relevance of concepts (Eldridge, 2009). Harris (2007) posited that stories allow us to see similarities in our experiences even when we are divided by cultural differences. Likewise, stories make learning more fun and help students remember relevant material (Frisch & Saunders, 2008).

Educators ranging from kindergarten teachers through college professors claim that storytelling helps improve student comprehension (Bonney, 1985). Hadzigeorinou (2006) further stated that storytelling helps create a sense of anticipation and curiosity about difficult concepts. In addition, Grose (2010) taught her law students not only to construct legal arguments, but also to deconstruct the stories they hear from clients and other attorneys through storytelling.

McDrury and Alterio (2003) believed that storytelling in education is a very thoughtful learning activity equating to experiences in life. They indicated that storytelling is itself a learning theory because of the deep thought it provokes and the new information it brings to the fore. Additionally, Horne (1916) made a connection between storytelling and the curriculum. He said, "Many subjects in our curriculum as taught repress individuality and personality; the story cultivates both" (Horne 1916, p. 28).

Furthermore Applebee (1996) pointed out two ways to construe the school curriculum. One, is knowledge-in-action, where the student is involved and learns through participation by doing, while the other is knowledge-out-of-context, in which the student studies about something but does not participate within the context of that which he is

learning (Watts,2006). Applebee wrote that the current school system emphasized knowledge-out-of-context, but he had found that the emphasis needed to be on knowledge-in-action. Students needed to participate in ongoing conversations about things that mattered within the curriculum.

Watts (2006) researched the impact stories had when teaching history to fourth grade students. She strived to find invigorating teaching methods so “that students walked away from their classes feeling like they had just stepped out of history, rather than merely having heard about it” (p. 22). She discovered a significant difference in the attitudes the students had regarding the lessons, those in the storied classes indicated greater enthusiasm. Cather (1926) stated “students became not only spectators, but also participants as well” (p. 37). Students needed to be able to connect everyday life with their schooling.

In particular, Caine et al. (2005) promoted storytelling in today's classrooms because it links well with brain-based and neuroscience research on how the brain learns best. McDrury and Alterio (2003) espoused the merits of storytelling as a successful exercise in reflective learning thus making it especially useful as an experiential learning tool. Erickson and Rossi (1976) explained the virtues of storytelling in terms of its' ability to create a trance-like state or state of learner openness that promotes processing new information on a deeper, more meaningful level. Most theorists tend to agree that storytelling offers the opportunity for improved learner engagement, information processing, and information retention over other more traditional forms of teaching and learning (Mooney & Holt , 1996) Several studies were discussed related to storytelling that underscore the transformational aspect of storytelling and the ability of storytelling to promote reflective learning (Speaker 2002).

Chapter Three: Project Design

In this chapter, I will explain the rationale behind incorporating storytelling into language-arts instruction to improve comprehension skills of K- 2 English Language Learners. A teacher's handbook has been created with stories embedded in lessons with a focus on enhancing comprehension skills. This handbook will be presented to educators in the format of a workshop, giving them an opportunity to get firsthand experience of the resource with colleagues. Storytelling can be used as an effective means to increase early literacy and promote reading comprehension skills (Haven & Ducey, 2007). Similarly, Pedersen (1995) affirmed that storytelling introduces children to literature and the beauty of language. Likewise, it develops a student's sense of narrative conventions and specifically the knowledge that stories have a beginning, a middle, an end, characters, a setting, a problem, and a resolution (Norfolk, Stenson, & Williams, 2006). Storytelling also enables students to engage in active listening and learning skills (Collins & Cooper, 2005).

There are many positives when it comes to the use of storytelling in an educational setting. While there are also a few negatives, my thoughts are that the positives out-weigh the negatives. First, according to Gallets (2005), stories "have the power to reach within us, to command emotion, to compel involvement, and to transport us into timelessness" (p. #). Additionally, "stories are a way of thinking, a primary organizer of information and ideas, the soul of a culture, and the consciousness of a people which boost the way in which we can know, remember and understand" (Livo & Rietz, 1986, p.2). In the same breath, Gere (2002) proposed that storytelling is an art-form which fosters self-expression in a manner that can be compared to singing, instrumental music, or art mediums.

The telling of stories contributes to education, social, and mental benefits for students and children. My belief is that people of all ages love to hear stories, and as a child I

enjoyed storytelling. In addition, as an educator I have used and continue to use storytelling. I have seen where it activates students' interest and keep them engaged. Children are great fans of stories and love to listen to them. However, it is becoming a lost art today, as many parents find very little time to spend with kids due to the hustle and bustle of life, which demands them to reserve more time for work. In an attempt to preserve this valuable instructional aide, I think it is imperative to initiate the use of storytelling in teaching with fidelity. I have experienced where students refuse to read a story for an activity because of the length. However, when I decided to read the same story aloud, the students interest level, participation and understand noticeably improved.

The comprehension skills of my previous class also improved through using stories occasionally in my language-arts block. Considering the success of my previous cohort, I decided to implement story telling in teaching comprehension with consistency and fidelity. Through storytelling, children are encouraged to listen to others, whether it be the storyteller or others listening to the story. Students have demonstrated more patience and respect for others when they speak. They have also begun to understand that others may not interpret things in the same way that they do. Storytelling accordingly provides children with a window to new worlds. It gives them the opportunity to learn new ideas and information; without realizing it, they are learning valuable life lessons through hearing an engaging, exciting story.

The final product of this project is a handbook with a collection with stories embedded in these lessons. The stories will be taken from different cultures and the main focus will be on comprehension. The document will be presented as a teacher's handbook and will provide supplemental stories. In creating this document consideration will be given to align them to the language-art standards. It is my hope that this guide will serve as

motivation for teachers to begin incorporating story telling into reading blocks to enhance comprehension.

Storytelling is a teaching activity which can exchange feelings and emotions and can develop many different skills for children. Children are fond of listening and reading stories and storytelling is considered a main teaching strategy for reaching educational objectives. For instance, it can help children to increase their ability to remember. Children will remember the name of characters and order of events happening in story. To promote the children' memory ability, teachers should ask students to retell the story that they have already listened to. Children will be able to acquire a wide range of knowledge from storytelling, as well. In my experience students have only a limited understanding of social aspects, but narrative provides them with a practical overview of such elements as social experiences and relationships. Through the stories, children gain awareness of the varied lifestyles, customs, and cultures of different countries in the world. In addition, in each story there always exists good characters and bad characters, so children are capable of distinguishing between the right and wrong behavior. In other words, children can learn the moral standards or moral values to orient their personality.

Storytelling is a very important way to attract children' attention. It can promote and maintain students' attention spans. It can help children to improve skills such as listening and speaking. When teachers tell a story, children automatically focus on listening to intonation, pronunciation, and so on. After that, they often imitate the new words or whole sentences. At the end of story, teachers therefore should ask several questions to students. For example, asking them to retell story, or requiring them share their feelings about characters, encourages them to create their own story and to reinforce those emerging linguistic skills. Listening and speaking skills will improve gradually through this method.

Besides, children will also more easily remember vocabulary and learn sentence patterns through narrative context and imagery. Story is regarded as a real situation, so children are able to guess the meanings of new words and learn the way to use these words in a certain context. (Caruthers, 2008). In addition, Kosa (2008) asserted that storytelling helps teachers reach students of all skill levels, because even challenging concepts and theories are easier to understand in story format. Educators ranging from kindergarten teachers through college professors claim that this approach helps improve student comprehension (Bonney, 1985).

Chapter Four: The Project

The final project is a staff development session intended to assist educators in understanding the importance of storytelling and how it can be incorporated in language-arts teaching to improve comprehension. The training session is supported with the use of a PowerPoint presentation and Ted Talk videos. In addition, the session provides suggested activities that can be used to incorporate storytelling in teaching. Materials to be used include lesson plans as well as graphic organizers and sample stories. The session also includes contextual information on storytelling and practical ways to implement it in the classroom.

Contextual Information

The presentation commences with an introductory activity requiring participants to share their storytelling experiences Figure 4.1; See also Appendix A, Slide # 2). Participants share a story that they remember being told and the impact it had on them. “Storytelling is the perfect, most nourishing food for growing minds. Often, when people think about the concepts and lessons learned in life, the ones that come to mind tend to be attached to stories. This is because they engaged your mind and help you to make sense of the world” (Neuburger, 2012, p. 11).

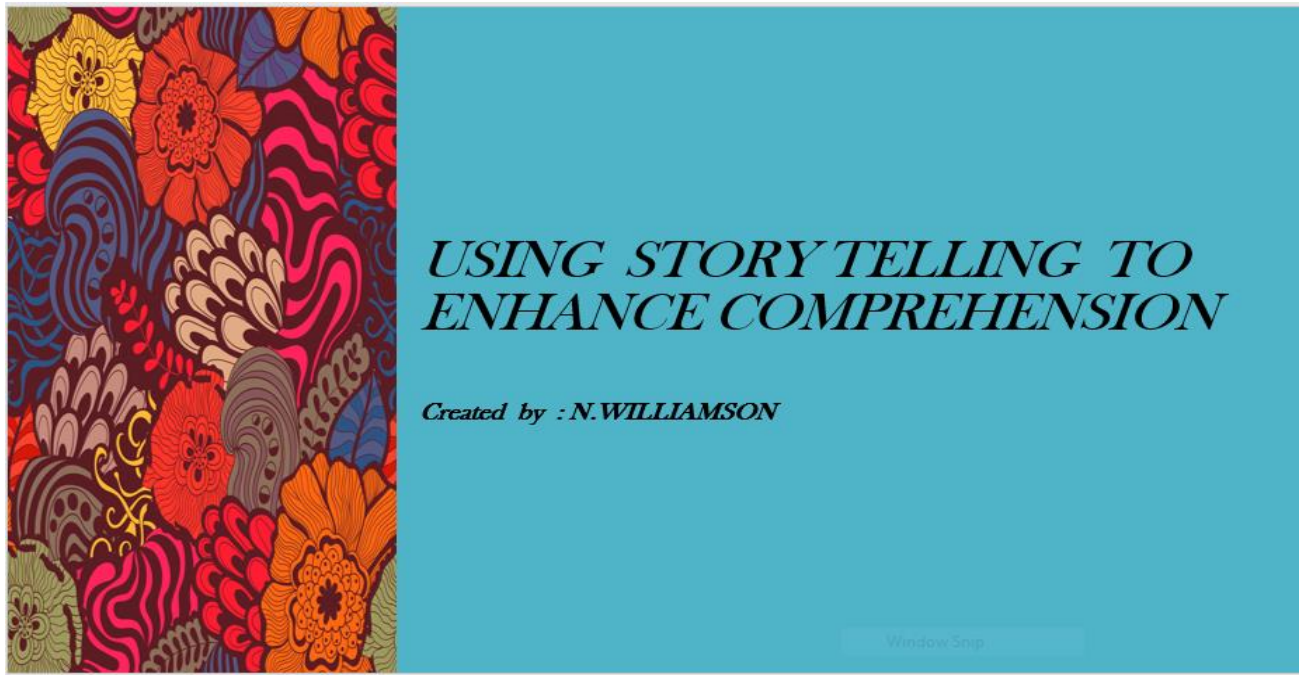


Figure 4.0 Using storytelling to enhance comprehension

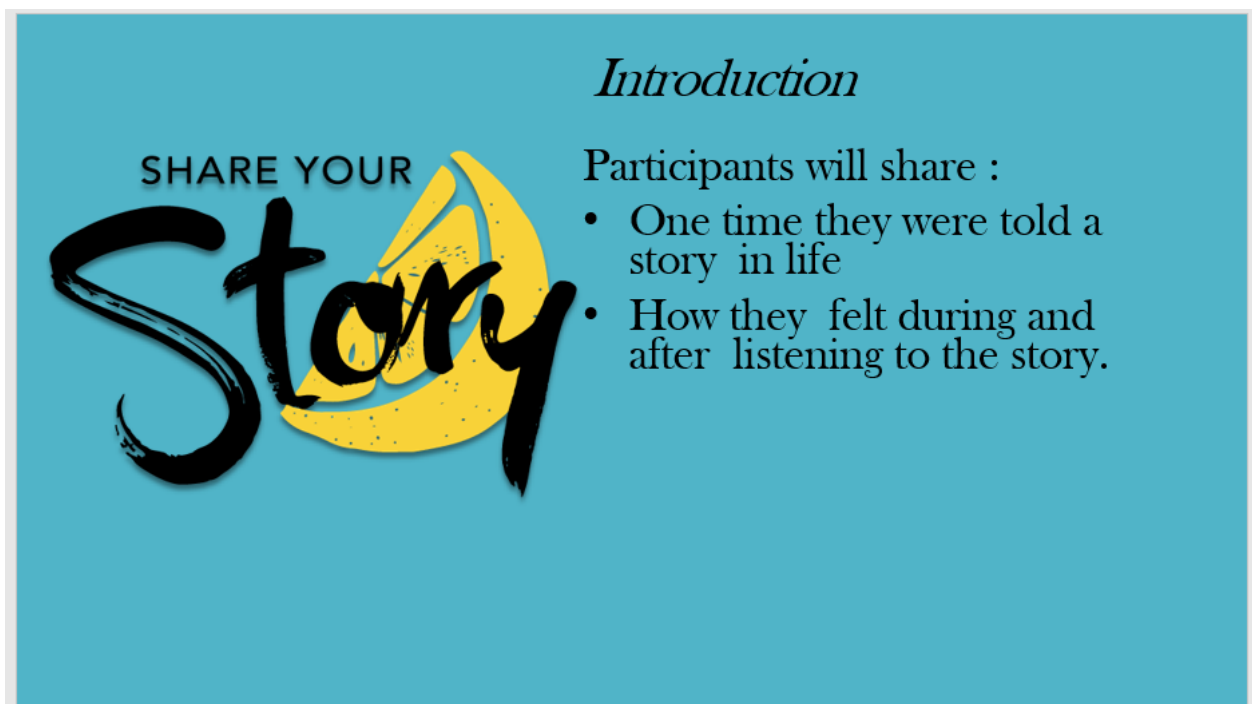


Figure 4:1 Introductory Staff Development Activity

I will provide a working definition for storytelling and a brief rationale for its use in this manner. (Figure 4.2-4.5) See also Appendix A, Slides # 3, #4, #5 and #6).

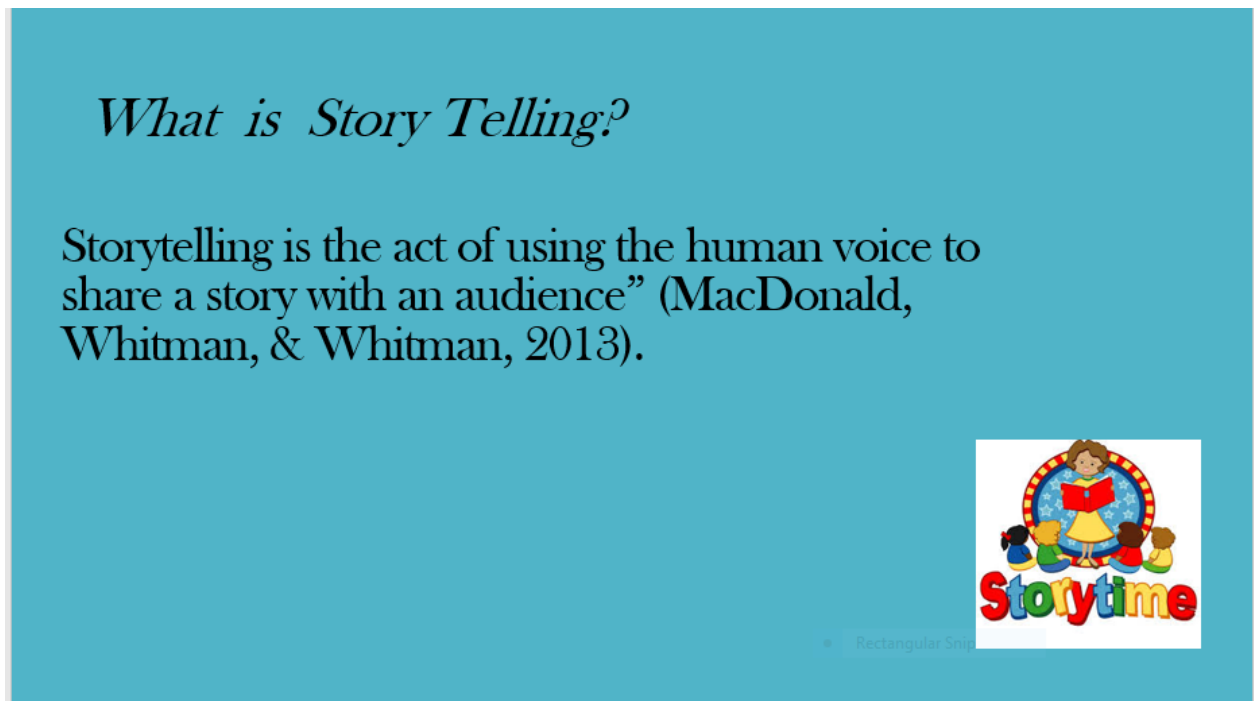


Figure 4.2: What is storytelling

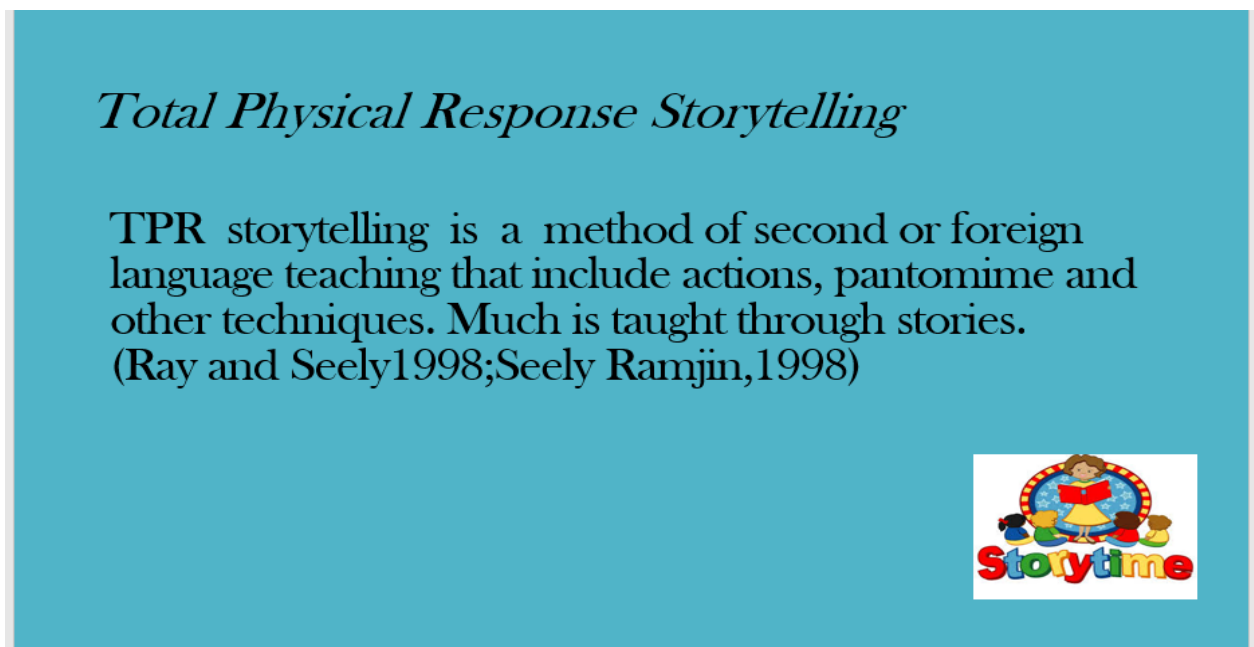


Figure 4.3 Total Physical Response Storytelling

WHY STORY TELLING?

Social Understanding

- Storytelling promotes understanding of other peoples and cultures.
- In a story we feel connected to others and this promotes compassion, tolerance, respect and responsibility.
- It connects us as a family and community. We see ourselves in the story. It is feeling, moving and being the benevolent king, the sharing elves and even the mischievous monkeys.

Kalfus, J., & Van, D. S. (1996).

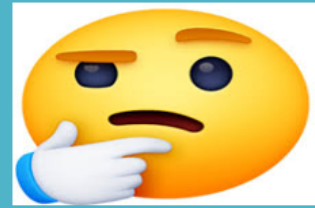


Figure 4.4: Why Story telling?

WHY STORY TELLING?

Mental

- The connection between storytelling and literacy is well established.
- Storytelling creates a love of language and motivation to read.
- Vocabulary, comprehension, sequencing, memory and creative writing all benefit from storytelling.
- Storytelling improves listening skills that are essential in learning and in relationships.
- Storytelling encourages creative writing, creative thinking and problem solving.

Kalfus, J., & Van, D. S. (1996).

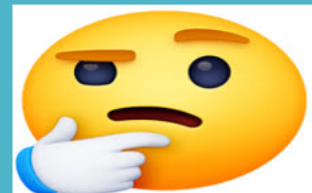


Figure 4.5: Why Storytelling?

WHY STORY TELLING?

Emotional

- In a story a listener can personally experience fear and heroism, love and hate, compassion, sorrow, grief and joy in a controlled and safe environment.
- Where else could you experience high adventure or tender love in such safety? Only in storytelling.

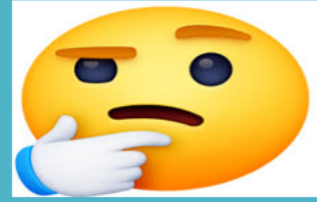


Figure 4.6: Why Storytelling?

Participants will watch a TedTalk presentation on the power of story and its impact on comprehension. They will then discuss the ideas and implications of the presentation (Figure 4.6: See Appendix A, Slide # 7

THE POWER OF STORYTELLING

Participants will watch a Ted Talk video about the power of story telling.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sh1-9xMZIfQ>

Figure 4.7: The Power of Storytelling.

Participants will brainstorm and share some benefits they think English Language Learners can gain from storytelling. I will then present a list of benefits to the participants. (Figure 4.8: See Appendix A, Slide #8)

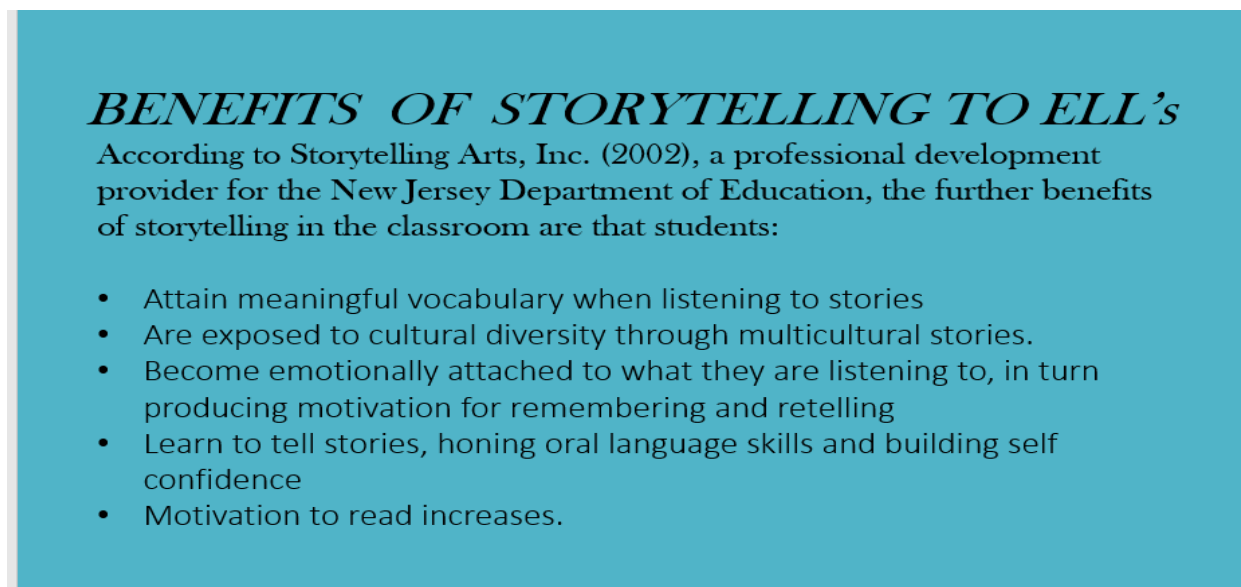


Figure 4.8: Benefits of Storytelling to ELL's.

Application

Participants will be provided with information on the relation between comprehension and storytelling. In addition, they will be given suggested ways to make storytelling fun, exciting and meaningful. (Figures 4.9-4.12; See also Appendix A, Slides # 9- #12).

STORY TELLING and COMPREHENSION

- Through active engagement, storytelling as a pedagogical strategy can strengthen reading comprehension by helping students develop of a sense of story (Aiex, 1988; Craig, Hull, Haggart, & Crowder, 2001; Phillips, 1999).
- Storytelling can be used as an effective means to increase early literacy and promote reading comprehension skills (Haven & Ducey, 2007).
- When students retell stories, they have the opportunity to further develop their skills of comprehension by relating stories with expressions. Eder (2007) describes using the oral tradition of storytelling as a powerful strategy for setting patterns of meaning.
- Comprehension, critical listening, and thinking skills are also developed by combining storytelling with questioning, imagery, inferencing, and retelling (Craig et al., 2001; Washburn, 1983).

Figure 4.9: Storytelling and Comprehension

MAKING STORIES FUN AND EXCITING

Add the tools of the teller :

- Voice
- Body
- Face
- Imagination
- Enthusiasm/Spirit /Cooperation with the audience.



Figure 4.10 Making Stories Fun and Exciting

EASY STEPS TO CREATE GREAT STORY TELLING

- Create a thirst or curiosity.
- Make your storytelling “big” or “small”.
- Take full control of facial expression.
- Talk with hands
- Create a storytelling atmosphere.
- Win the audience with the first line.
- Tell the story with feeling
- Involve the audience in the story .
- Slow down at the ending .

(Haven & Ducey, 2007).



Figure 4.11 Easy Steps to Create Great Story Telling.

HOW TO Tell STORIES?

- Engage your audience
- Build the scene
- Build and release tension
- Focus on what's logical
- Keep the flow logical
- Make it feel conclusive.



Figure 4.12 How to Tell Stories

Participants will be provided with three examples of how storytelling can be incorporated into reading instruction. (Figure 4.13- 4.15; See also Appendix A Slides # 13-15).

STORYTELLING and INSTRUCTION

Storytellers on Tour

- Have students practice retelling folktales in their classroom.
- When students feel confident, teams of three or four students at a time can then take their tales to other classes for a storytelling concert.
- If older students are sent to the younger grades, ask the younger grades to thank the storytellers with drawings inspired by their stories.



Figure 4.13 Storytelling and Instruction.

Storytelling And Instruction

A Story Treasure Hunt

- A class selects a well-known fable or folktale.
- The plot is simplified into a sequence of events that can be transcribed onto cards with short sections of the tale on each.
- Students hide the cards out of sequence throughout the school or classroom. A treasure map showing the exact location where all the cards are hidden, is given to another class (Or, with clues, one card can lead to the next).
- Groups of students must find the cards and assemble them in correct order. The treasure is finding the **WHOLE** story.
- Two classes can trade treasure hunts by putting the stories on two different-colored cards.
- The treasure hunts can go on simultaneously and, when each class has found the other's story, they confirm it by assembling it, learning the plot and sending representatives to retell it, or to act it out as a skit to the other class.

Figure 4.14 Storytelling and Instruction

STORY TELLING AND INSTRUCTION

Story Circle

- One person begins a tale and stops after a few sentences.
- The next person picks up the story thread and continues it, then stops.
- The next person adds to it and so on until the tale comes to a resolution.
- The story could begin with a pre-selected title or subject to guide the improvisation.
- Try recording the story circle on a tape recorder for later listening.



Figure 4.15 Storytelling and Instruction.

Conclusion

I conclude the staff development with a closing thought on the power of storytelling and question and answer session Figure 4.16 (See Appendix A; Slide #16). Additionally, I will make the PowerPoint available to participants as a hard copy and electronically (Appendix A); pamphlets with benefits of storytelling and resources that can be used to further understand the topic will be made available (Appendix B). I will implore participants to collaborate and make an attempt to incorporate storytelling in reading and share feedback of learners with other colleagues to promote the use of storytelling in instruction. Sample lesson plans with storytelling being incorporated will be made accessible (Appendix C).

CONCLUSION

- Storytelling can touch on all skills in language development
- It fun, creative and very effective
- Involves the use of the whole body (MI)
- Holistic teaching method
- Storytelling method provides huge space for fantasy and creativity.
- All language skills, functions and structures may be taught by stories.
- Storytelling method is an important teaching technique.
- Stories guide a human for his or her whole life and use them when the human learn his or her mother tongue. Consequently it is natural to learn a language with the help of stories.

CONCLUSION

We develop stronger memories for the events of our lives when we learn to convert our events into meaningful stories.

One good story always leads to another point of view,
 another adventure,
 another image,
 another voice,
 another song,
 another place,
 another time. (Taberski, 2000, p. 13)

Figure 4.16 Conclusion.

Conclusion

Learning English is a challenging and complex process because it requires that learners develop their communicative competence in four language domains: reading, writing, listening, and speaking, and effectively use the language. Comprehension is a vital part of the learning process; however, incorporating story telling can help to bridge the gap and aid with the understanding the text. The use of this noteworthy oral tradition implemented by teachers with consistency and fidelity develops all language domains, which creates optimal achievement in all subject areas.

Storytelling creates a seamless learning bond between teacher and students, and when families can relate to the learning process, which they can through stories, the interest level of learners is piqued. Storytelling embraces the path of lifelong learning and alternative forms of assessment. It is beneficial for educators to utilize this avenue of instruction to improve the comprehension skills of English Language Learners.

This project highlighted the cohesiveness that exists between storytelling and comprehension. Executing this project provided memorable moments in teaching and learning and revealed that English Language Learners are capable of comprehending text amidst challenges with limited English. This project resulted in an increase in task completion, class participation and improved family engagement. Parents actively engaged in the storytelling process and provided feedback on stories their learners talked about at home that were shared in class. Selecting stories was a partnership between teacher and families as we created a story bank. In addition, students shared stories from the readings outside class and this was noted the teacher for use in a future lesson. The project led to repeated reassessment of my teaching skills as I gathered stories and ensured that they were relevant to the curriculum standards. The experience of collecting the stories, assessing their

relevance, and becoming familiar with them, so they were told and not read, was time consuming but worth it. The experiences garnered from doing this project are lasting. While telling a story one day to my class, as I saw the curious faces of the learners, I had a flashback to my childhood elementary years when I was told stories by my teachers. It is my hope that just as how I have been significantly impacted by the design and implementation of the project, the effect will be same or greater for other teachers incorporating it and their students.

The final product of this project entails a PowerPoint and workbook with lesson plans, with stories incorporated, to teach comprehension. The task of creating the workbook and PowerPoint was quite daunting as I am not technologically savvy, but the product revealed that perseverance can help to create meaningful teaching learning materials for educators of English Language Learners.

It is my desire that teachers will gain a wealth of benefits from the staff development session and the materials provided through the PowerPoint and the workbook. I hope that teachers will be nudged to do further research into the use of storytelling in teaching comprehension to English Language Learners and share their findings with the wider teaching fraternity. In the near future I hope storytelling will be extended to develop other areas of reading such as grammar and vocabulary. Analyzing research on storytelling and comprehension revealed that many studies have and are currently being done on the use of storytelling to develop the language domains of speaking and listening. I am encouraging educators to implement this project and use the results to conduct research on the effectiveness of storytelling in developing comprehension skills.

The tasks of successfully executing this project-based research has contributed significantly to my professional development. I was totally immersed in analyzing primary

and secondary sources to complete the literature review. My writing skills were challenged; however, I learned the rudiments of academic writing. It is my intent that the project will serve as a springboard for educators who will continue the work of utilizing stories in teaching and learning.

Appendix A: Workbook

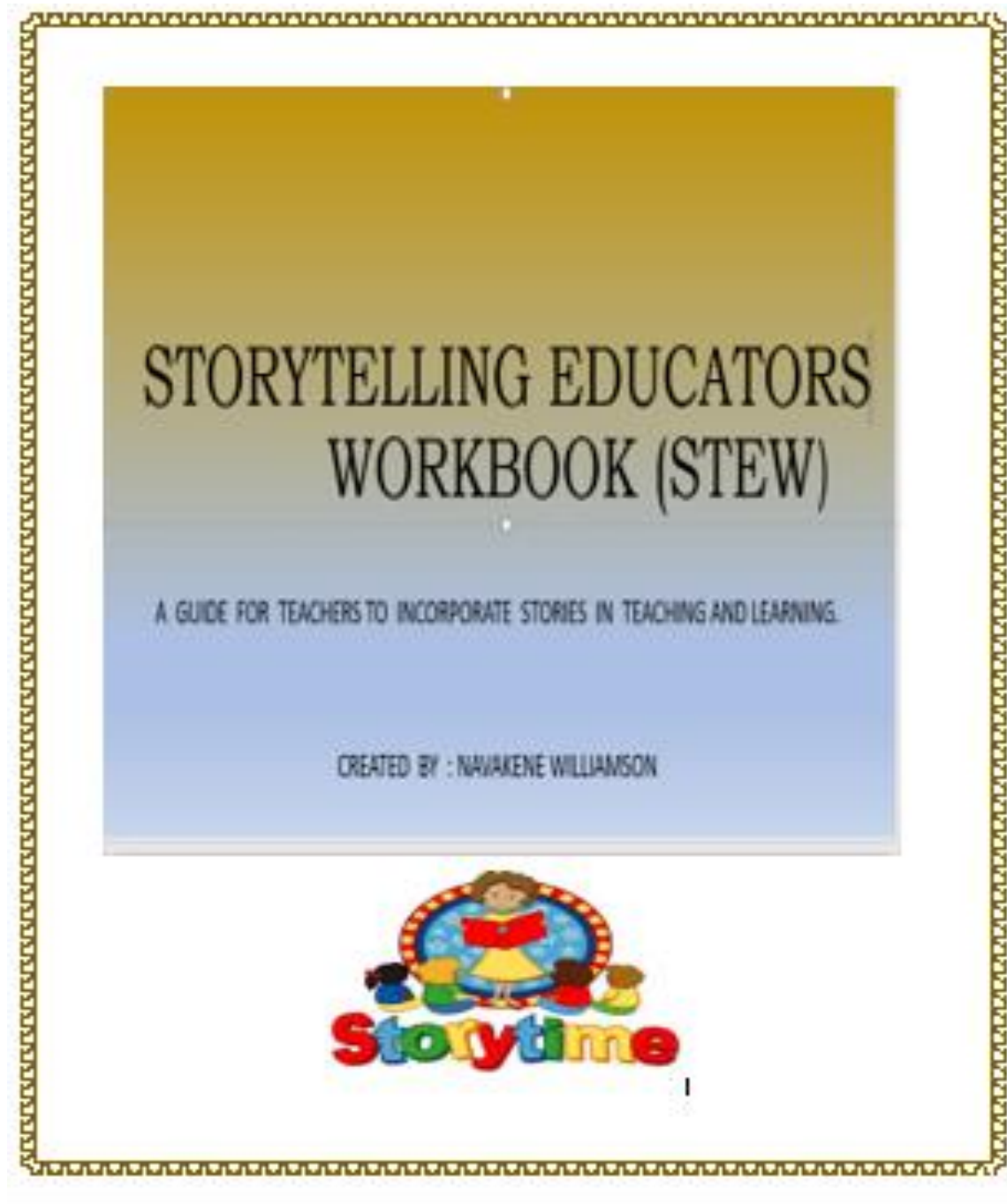


Figure 4.17 Storytelling Educator Workbook

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Pages

Purpose of the Workbook	29
INTRODUCTION	30
THEORETICAL OVERVIEW	31
Tools of Storytelling	32
Criteria for Good Storytelling	33
SELECTING AND MAPPING A STORY	34
Story Mountain	35
Getting your story ready	36
Telling your story.....	37
USING A STORY MAP.....	38
LESSON PLANS.....	42
Benefits of Storytelling.....	56

Figure 4.18 Table of Contents

Purpose of the Workbook

This book is created to help teachers perfect their craft of storytelling and incorporate it in teaching and learning. In order to implement effectively, teachers must first become competent tellers themselves. Fortunately, this is not too difficult, as storytelling is a very accessible art form. This workbook is primarily for teachers who work with students in grades K-3. We will briefly explore the connections between oral storytelling and developing emerging readers' abilities to use reading comprehension strategies. Stories can teach and reinforce reading comprehension approaches before students acquire decoding skills.

Figure 4.19 Purpose of workbook

INTRODUCTION

Storytelling is an old established practice dating back to before writing. Storytelling can be formal, casual, rehearsed, spontaneous, free-spirited or regimented, in person or digital. Anyway, you hear it, it is the verbal telling of a story, not read, but told. “Storytelling. It’s everywhere. Whether you fly on airplanes, take buses, sit in a crowded doctor’s office, stand in a line at the grocery store, take a break at the water cooler, or sit with a child or an elder at a family dinner, give a listen. You’ll hear stories. Realistic and fantastic. Stories learned in the living. Stories honed by countless telling...We are storying people” (Trousdale, Woestehoff, & Schwartz, 1994). The telling of a story is to convey happenings or events in words, and images, often by improvisation, fabrication, or embellishment. Narratives or stories have been shared in every culture as a means of entertainment, education, cultural preservation, and instilling values. “Storytelling is the act of using the human voice to share a story with an audience” (MacDonald, Whitman, & Whitman, 2013). Storytelling can be defined as “the act of telling or conveying a tale or story by a teller” (Webster’s Dictionary Online, 2014).

Figure 4.20 Introduction

THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

TPRS: Teaching Proficiency Through Reading and Storytelling

TPRS was developed by an American Spanish language teacher named Blaine Ray.

There are a few key components of the method that I think are very important and I want you to know about them.

- **Comprehensible input:** In order to acquire a language, you must understand what you hear. If you mostly understand what you hear (or read), it is comprehensible to you.
Listening is so important!!
- **Stories:** It is easier to learn new vocabulary and pick up grammatical structures naturally by listening (and understanding) stories that are short, funny, silly and involve emotions or surprises
- **Question and answer lessons:** Telling the story and answering lots of questions serves two functions.
 - First, because the question and answer lesson are very repetitive, asking similar questions over and over again throughout the lesson, you get to hear the vocabulary and grammatical structures many, many times, which leads to better understanding and more retention. (This means you remember the words better!)
 - Second, because the questions are simple and repetitive, you begin to understand quickly and answer quickly. Learning how to answer the questions quickly, without translating, without thinking will lead you to becoming a fluent English speaker.

Lisa Biskup *on* January 26,2014

Figure 4.21 Theoretical Overview

Tools of Storytelling

Storytelling

Storytelling is the art of performing a story in one's own words from memory. It is not about memorizing word for word. Stories might come from folktales, fiction, or accounts of personal events. Storytellers use -

Voice



Body

Facial Expression
Gesture



Mind

Imagination
Memory
Concentration



Stuart@ Stotts.com

Figure 4.22 Tools of Storytelling

Criteria for Good Storytelling

Teachers are encouraged as the storyteller and as characters to

Throw oneself into telling the story.

Teachers should believe in the value of the story and be enthusiastic about sharing it with listeners. They need to commit themselves to the story, trust it, get into it, and tell it wholeheartedly.

Use voice modulation.

Give variations in tone-of-voice, attitude, and emotion; speed, pitch, and rhythm. Give contrast—even opposites—between the various voices (slow and fast, continuously and with pauses, soft and loud, low and high pitch, meek and proud emotions, etc.).

Use facial expressions, gestures, body language (posture and movement).

Visualize the elements of each scene and describe these elements to listeners.

Act-out (step-into, role-play) characters: speak their words and physically become these characters.

Make **eye-contact** with individual listeners both as narrator, and when role-playing a character. Try looking at a single listener while speaking a complete thought.

Develop repeated conversational exchanges between characters in the story.

Sing **songs** (or use other verbal delivery styles).

Songs could be sung by the narrator, about something or someone in the story. And, songs could be sung by a character, about something that she is thinking -- “I want to do this...”, “I feel like this...”, “This is what I did...” <https://www.storytellinginstitute.org>

Figure 4.23 Criteria for good storytelling

SELECTING AND MAPPING A STORY

Stories are everywhere, but it can be hard to find a good story for telling. You will want to start with short stories that you can remember. Fairy tales such as *Cinderella* make good stories to tell. Folktales such as Johnny Appleseed and Paul Bunyan make good stories to tell.

- Pick a story you like to read. If you don't like the story, it will be hard to spend a lot of time with it.
- Pick a story that has some things it says over and over. That makes it easier to remember. This would be a story such as *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* when each bear says, "Someone's been eating my porridge."
- Once you have a story you want to tell, you have to learn it well.
- Try reading the story three times. Now use the story mountain at right to lay out the main points of the story.
- Make notes about the points on the lines provided.
- Using your story mountain with notes, tell the story out loud.
- Try it three times. Now try it without the story mountain.

Figure 4.24 Selecting and mapping a story

Story Mountain

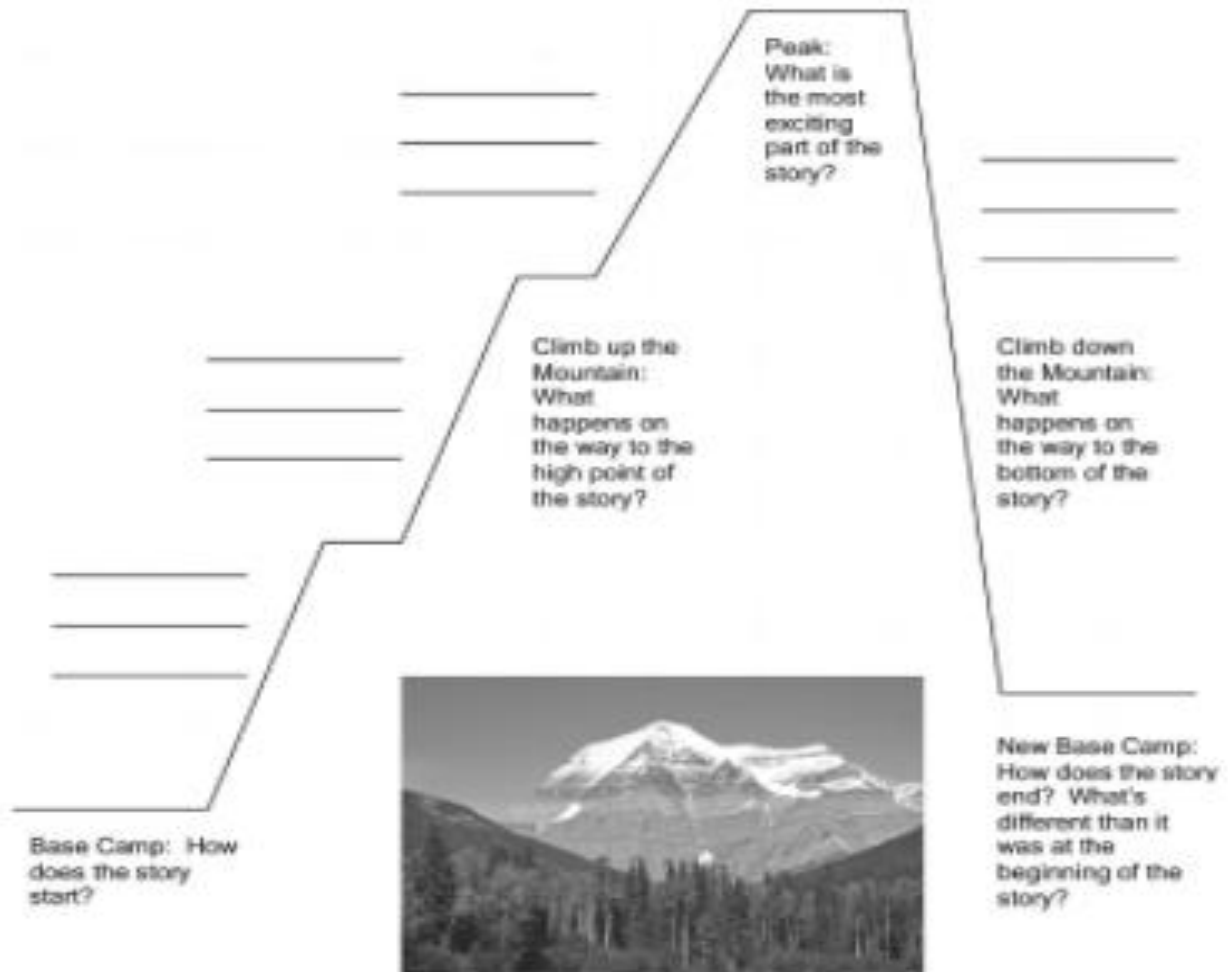


Figure 4.25 Story mountain

Getting your story ready

- When you have a story and a story mountain, and you know your story very well.
- It is time to get your story ready for telling. First, you need a written-down copy of your story.
- If you can print it on the computer, leave space to the side for notes, like the story on the next two pages. If your story is in your own book, use a pencil or sticky notes to write things down.
- You may want to use props when you tell your story. Props can be small or large.
- You can wear a full costume or a hat or a cape. You may want to wear a specific hat every time you tell a story.
- You may like to use puppets or a musical instrument such as a harmonica. You can use cut-out figures or stuffed animals. You may want to use a blanket or a towel.
- Remember that you want to keep it interesting!



Figure 4.26 Getting your story ready

Telling your story

- Now you're ready to tell your story to students!
- Make sure you have everything you need (props, your special storytelling hat or cape, etc.).
- Make sure everyone is quiet and ready to listen before you begin.
- Tell them where you got your story. Did you get it from a book? Is it an old fairy tale or an old Indian legend? Tell them!
- Look people in the eye while you're telling the story.
- You can use the class to help you tell the story. If there is something that repeats (like the trip, trap across the bridge of the Billy goats), let your students make the sounds with you.
- Invite them by saying something like, "Slap your hands on your legs with me!" You could also have the audience repeat lines with you, such as, "Not by the hair of my chinny, chin, chin!"
- If the students get loud, pause. Wait for a second until they stop talking.
- Begin and end your story in a good way.



Figure 4.27 Telling your story

USING A STORY MAP

- Discuss the main component of a story (e.g. characters, setting, plot and theme or beginning, middle, end).
- Provide each student with a blank story map organizer and model how to complete it.
- As students read, have them complete the story map. After reading, they should fill in any missing parts.

Sample Story Map

Name _____ Date _____

Story Map 1

Write notes in each section.

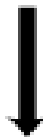
Setting:	Time:	Place:



Characters:



Problem:



Plot/Events:

Resolution:

Sample Story Map

Story Map		Instructions: Fill in the boxes to show how your story developed.	Name: _____
Characters:	Setting:	Problem:	
Title: Author:		Solution:	
How the Characters Tried to Solve the Problem:			

Story Mapping

EVENT / STORY PYRAMID

MAIN CHARACTER'S NAME

TWO WORDS DESCRIBING THIS PERSON

THREE WORDS DESCRIBING THE SETTING or PLACE

FOUR WORDS DESCRIBING AN IMPORTANT EVENT

FIVE WORDS DESCRIBING THE MAIN IDEA OR THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS EVENT

LESSON PLANS

Materials

- Fable to read to the students (The tortoise and the hare)
- Handouts with a space for pictures and a sentence

Objectives

- Students will listen to a fable.
- Students will answer questions about the story and predict what will happen next.
- Students will offer their own examples of morals and lessons to the rest of the class.
- Students will draw pictures and write sentences demonstrating their understanding of the lesson.
- Students will provide their own examples of stories or fables with lessons or morals in them.

Activities

1. The teacher will tell the tale out loud to the students. Throughout the course of the story, the teacher will stop and ask questions such as:

- What do you think will happen next?
- What is this character like?
- Can you tell me what happened so far in the story?

These questions serve to introduce students to the art of storytelling, as well as to the important aspects of listening and reading.

2. Once the story is finished, the teacher will introduce the concept of the moral or the lesson of the story by asking students the following question:

- What did you learn from listening to this story?

3. A very brief lecture ensues in which the teacher explains the definition of a moral.

4. The teacher asks the students the following questions and writes the students' answers on the board:

- What are some other lessons or morals that you know?
- What lessons or morals do you have in your home?
- Have you read other stories with morals or lessons? What were they?

5. The students are asked to draw a picture from the story which shows the main character learning the lesson or moral. Underneath the story, students must write down what the moral or

lesson that is being demonstrating in the story. The teacher will circulate in the classroom to help with any questions regarding ideas, words, sentence structure, spelling etc.

6. Homework: The students are asked to bring in their favorite book that has a moral or lesson in it to share with the rest of the class.

Storytelling: Carnival crime

Topic: Carnival in Brazil and a diamond theft

Aims:

- To develop extended listening and prediction skills in young learners using a short story
- To reinforce the use of the simple past tense

Level: Primary

Introduction

Stories are a highly adaptable teaching tool and can be used in a variety of ways to teach a variety of skills. This particular lesson focuses on extended listening skills and getting students to actively participate in the storytelling process, allowing them to use their prediction skills in a creative and fun way. It draws on materials from the British Council [LearnEnglish](#) site.

It is not always necessary or desirable to do a more formal learning activity after telling a story in class, as storytelling activities are a good way of letting students simply enjoy listening and learning English. However, there are also some follow-up activities that concentrate on different aspects of language in the story. An interactive online exercise is also available on the LearnEnglish site.

Procedure

Pre-reading task:

- ☐ Write ‘**Carnival Crime**’ on the board and tell the students that you are going to tell them a story called ‘Carnival Crime’.
- ☐ Then ask the students if they know what a carnival is and ask them questions about carnivals to capture their interest such as:
 - ‘Do we have a carnival in our country?’
 - ‘When do we have our carnival?’
 - ‘What do people wear during carnival?’
 - ‘What do people do during carnival?’
 - ‘What other countries have carnivals?’
- ☐ Then tell the students that the carnival in the story is in Brazil and ask the students if they

know where Brazil is, and if there is a map of the world in the class, get a student to point to Brazil on the map and elicit from the students everything they know about Brazil. It would also be helpful to show the students pictures of Brazil and the Rio Carnival either on the Internet or in books such as a world Atlas or a picture dictionary

Story-telling activity

- ☐ First of all explain to the students that you are going to tell them a story but that you need them to help you and all that they have to do is to listen and answer some simple questions when you ask them.
- ☐ This story telling activity involves the teacher taking the main role as the principal storyteller with the students acting as secondary storytellers.
- ☐ You can follow the story telling script on **Worksheet A** word for word and use the story telling cards as visual prompts to help you tell the story.

Tip: I recommend that you read the story a few times yourself until you can remember it and then tell the story in your own words stopping in the same way to get student input. Telling the story in your own words as opposed to reading word for word from the text will make the story seem more real and authentic to the students.

- ☐ Now start telling the story using the story telling script and the story cards, which you will need to cut out before class.

Tip: Before a story telling activity, it is often a good idea to do something to change the mood of the class and to create a special time for story telling, such as to put on a special story telling hat or coat, or to play some music or have the class say a short story-telling time rhyme.

Student story-telling task

- ☐ Once you have told the story once get the students as a class to tell the story back to you using the pictures on the board to help them.
- ☐ Then give the students **Worksheet B** and see if they can join up the pictures of the story in the correct order and re-tell the story in pairs.

Follow up task 1

Use the drawing activity from **Worksheet C** to get students to create and describe their own carnival costumes. Ask students to follow these instructions.

- ☐ First of all, draw a head and a neck of a person wearing a carnival costume. Draw a carnival mask on the face of the person.
- ☐ Now fold your paper and pass it to the person on your right.
- ☐ Now draw the arms and top half of the costume.

- ☐ Now fold your paper and pass it to the person on your right.
- ☐ Now draw the legs of the person wearing the costume.
- ☐ Now fold your paper and pass it to the person on your right.
- ☐ Now draw the shoes of the person wearing the carnival costume.
- ☐ Now fold your paper and pass it to the person on your right.

The students then unfold their costumes and in small pairs or groups describe their costumes to each other and take a vote on the silliest costume. Students can then write a short description of their costume, which they can pin on the wall together with their costume.

Follow up task 2

- ☐ If you have access to computers with the Internet or even just one computer with a data projector, the students can read and listen to the story on-line.
<http://www.learnenglish.org.uk/kids/stories.asp?story=44>

Note: this is an old plan, so the webpage it links to is no longer available. You can print out the text from the worksheets for this lesson plan.

- ☐ There is also an interactive vocabulary activity at:
<http://www.learnenglish.org.uk/words/activities/clothesdr.html>
- ☐ If you don't have access to the story on-line you can give the students the original script **Worksheet D** and ask them to find the differences in pairs between the class story and the original story script.

Lesson Plan

Activities in this lesson plan will assist English Language Learners in formulating oral stories to tell their peers. Activities focus on identifying the necessary parts in a story and creating stories based on images and provided scenarios.

Learning Objectives

As a result of this lesson, students will

- identify information that is included in a story
- create a story from a given image or scenario
- use correct English to tell a story to a group

Curriculum Standards

ELP 9-12.2 ELLs will participate in grade-appropriate oral and written exchanges of information, ideas, and analyses, responding to peer, audience, or reader comments and questions.

ELP 9-12.7 ELLs will adapt language choices to purpose, task, and audience when speaking and writing.

ELP 9-12.9 ELLs will create clear and coherent grade-appropriate speech and text,

Materials Needed

- Chart with story questions
- Amusing photographs that will spark stories (2-3)
- Projector or SMART Board
- Who, what, when, where, why, and how story slips (1 of each for each student)
- To create these slips, come up with different scenarios to record on each slip. For example, *each who slip should contain a different character idea like a cowboy, baker, policeman, or a news anchor*. See the activity below for additional instructions and ideas for creating these slips.

Instructions

- Introduce the lesson to the students by telling them a story about something amusing that happened to you.
- When you finish telling the story, post these questions on a chart on the board:
 - Who was the story about?
 - When and where did the story happen?
 - What was that person trying to do or accomplish?
 - Why couldn't he do what he wanted to do?
 - How did he overcome the problem?
 - What happened at the end?
- Tell the students that answering these questions can help them learn all the parts that have to be included when they tell their own stories.
- Underline the words: who, what, when, where, why, how, and what happened in the list of questions on the chart. Tell the students that we sometimes call these the '5 W's and an H' to help us remember all the things to include in a story.
- Using a projector or SMART Board to show the students an amusing photograph. Tell them to think about what is happening in the picture, and then think about what they think will happen next.
- Give the students time to think, then have them turn to a partner and tell their stories.
- After each story is finished, ask the pair to identify the who, what, when, where, why, how, and what happened.
- When all the students have finished, repeat the activity with a different photograph. Be sure the students work with a different partner each time you have them tell a story.

LESSON PLAN

Title of Story: Thomas' Snowsuit by Robert Munsch. This story can be used to develop different comprehension skills.

Duration: Extended Period

Focus:

- Sequencing
- Cause and Effect
- Character Traits

Objectives:

- I can ask and answer questions about key details.
- I can sequence event in a story or informational text
- I can recognize and identify cause and effect in informational text and stories.

Activities

Listen to the story Thomas' Snowsuit and engage in a discussion about story then answer questions using sentence starters provided.

1. What did Thomas say when his mother asked him to put on his snowsuit?

Thomas said _____.

Adapted: Amy Bratsos

2. What happened after Thomas' teacher picked up the snowsuit with one hand and Thomas with the other hand and tried to stick them together?

After they tried putting the snowsuit together

3. Who was at the classroom door and saw Thomas and his teacher having an ENORMOUS fight?

_____ was at the classroom door.

4. Why did Thomas finally put on his snowsuit?

Thomas finally put on his snowsuit _____

5. Why did the principal move to Arizona?

The principal finally moved to Arizona_____



- Listen as your teacher reads Thomas' Snowsuit by Robert Munsch.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What happened first?
- What happened second?
- What was the last thing that happened in the story?
- Is it important to know the sequence of the story in order to comprehend the story?

Why?

Adapted: Amy Bratsos

Directions: Read the sentences, then cut them out and put them in the right sequence to retell the story of Thomas' Snowsuit. Read your sentences with a partner to be sure they are in the correct order, then glue them next to each numbered rectangle.

Thomas went to school and he wouldn't put on his snowsuit at recess time.

The principal tried to get Thomas in his snowsuit, but the principal ended up wearing the teacher's dress, the teacher had on the principal's clothes, and Thomas ended up in his underwear!

Thomas ended up wearing the teacher's dress and the teacher had on his snowsuit.

Thomas put on his snowsuit and ran outside to recess when a friend called him.

The principal moved to Arizona.

Thomas' mom showed him the new snowsuit she bought for him and Thomas said he didn't like it.

The teacher begged Thomas to put on his snowsuit.

Thomas and his mom got in an **enormous** fight, but Thomas ended up with the snowsuit on.

Adapted: Amy Bratsos



Students and teacher will

- Discuss the terms cause and effect
- Relate cause and effect to the story guided by the teacher using picture and questions.
- Complete activity below in pairs.
- Cut out the pictures below.
- Match each picture that is a “cause” with the “effect” that goes with it.
- Glue the pictures in the correct boxes



cause		effect
<input type="text"/>	→	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	→	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	→	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	→	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	→	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	→	<input type="text"/>

Thomas' actions cause a lot of trouble.

In the boxes below illustrate and write a matching sentence to describe two “events that happen
in the book.



Lesson Plan

A Storytelling Festival

This activity encourages students to explore the native cultures of the Americas, to learn some aspects of oral storytelling, and to share their knowledge with others.

Materials

Examples of legends or folktales from the cultures of peoples native to the Americas

Activities:

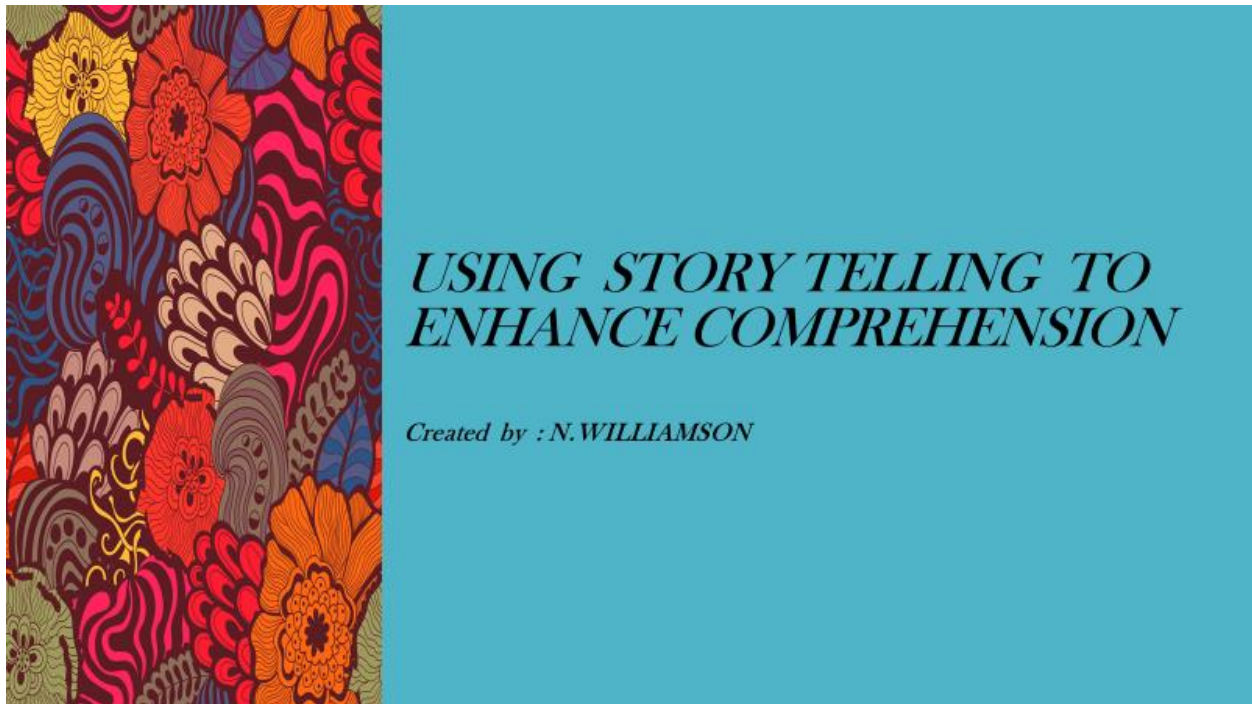
- Introduce students to legends and folktales of native American cultures by reading one to the class. If possible, choose a story that explains some aspect of the culture, such as the origin of a custom, or of the environment, like the existence of a mountain range.
- Explain that many of these stories were created by storytellers, who passed them on to others orally, not in writing. Only later were they written down. Tell students that they are going to become oral storytellers themselves. They will choose a story to learn and then present the story as part of a storytelling festival.
- Divide students into storytelling teams or, if you prefer, have them form their own groups. Give students time to do research and to choose a story. Tell students that their story should say something important about the culture from which it comes. Remind students that their stories will be performed and that they might want to choose a story that lends itself to a dramatic reading or presentation. (Note: You might want to review the groups' choices).
- The group should study the story and make a plan for how they would like to perform, or "tell," it. For example, students may want to assign different parts of the story to each group member or have one group member act out a part or play an instrument, etc. The group should know the beginning, middle, and end of its story.
- Encourage students to be creative with their presentations. Some students may want to add music and props, and some may be able to incorporate costumes or rhythmic movements.
- Allow enough rehearsal time for each group.

Benefits of Storytelling

When you tell your first story, there is a magical moment. The children sit enthralled, mouths open, eyes wide. If that isn't enough reason, then consider that storytelling:

- Inspires purposeful talking, and not just about the story -- there are many games you can play.
- Raises the enthusiasm for reading texts to find stories, reread them, etc.
- Initiates writing because children will quickly want to write stories and tell them.
- Enhances the community in the room.
- Improves listening skills.
- Really engages the boys who love the acting.
- Is enjoyed by children from kindergarten to the end of elementary school.
- Gives a motivating reason for English-language learners to speak and write English.

Appendix B: Slides



Slide #1



Slide # 2

What is Story Telling?

Storytelling is the act of using the human voice to share a story with an audience” (MacDonald, Whitman, & Whitman, 2013).



Slide #3

Total Physical Response Storytelling

TPR storytelling is a method of second or foreign language teaching that include actions, pantomime and other techniques. Much is taught through stories. (Ray and Seely 1998; Seely Ramjin, 1998)



Slide #4

WHY STORY TELLING?

Social Understanding

- Storytelling promotes understanding of other peoples and cultures.
- In a story we feel connected to others and this promotes compassion, tolerance, respect and responsibility.
- It connects us as a family and community. We see ourselves in the story. It is feeling, moving and being the benevolent king, the sharing elves and even the mischievous monkeys.

Kalfus, J., & Van, D. S. (1996).



Slide # 5

WHY STORY TELLING?

Mental

- The connection between storytelling and literacy is well established.
- Storytelling creates a love of language and motivation to read.
- Vocabulary, comprehension, sequencing, memory and creative writing all benefit from storytelling.
- Storytelling improves listening skills that are essential in learning and in relationships.
- Storytelling encourages creative writing, creative thinking and problem solving.

Kalfus, J., & Van, D. S. (1996).



Slide # 6

WHY STORY TELLING?

Emotional

- In a story a listener can personally experience fear and heroism, love and hate, compassion, sorrow, grief and joy in a controlled and safe environment.
- Where else could you experience high adventure or tender love in such safety? Only in storytelling.



Slide # 7

THE POWER OF STORYTELLING

Participants will watch a Ted Talk video about the power of story telling.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sh1-9xMZIfQ>

Slide # 8

BENEFITS OF STORYTELLING TO ELL's

According to Storytelling Arts, Inc. (2002), a professional development provider for the New Jersey Department of Education, the further benefits of storytelling in the classroom are that students:

- Attain meaningful vocabulary when listening to stories
- Are exposed to cultural diversity through multicultural stories.
- Become emotionally attached to what they are listening to, in turn producing motivation for remembering and retelling
- Learn to tell stories, honing oral language skills and building self confidence
- Motivation to read increases.

Slide # 9

STORY TELLING and COMPREHENSION

- Through active engagement, storytelling as a pedagogical strategy can strengthen reading comprehension by helping students develop of a sense of story (Aiex, 1988; Craig, Hull, Haggart, & Crowder, 2001; Phillips, 1999).
- Storytelling can be used as an effective means to increase early literacy and promote reading comprehension skills (Haven & Ducey, 2007).
- When students retell stories, they have the opportunity to further develop their skills of comprehension by relating stories with expressions. Eder (2007) describes using the oral tradition of storytelling as a powerful strategy for setting patterns of meaning.
- Comprehension, critical listening, and thinking skills are also developed by combining storytelling with questioning, imagery, inferencing, and retelling (Craig et al., 2001; Washburn, 1983).

Slide # 10

MAKING STORIES FUN AND EXCITING

Add the tools of the teller :

- Voice
- Body
- Face
- Imagination
- Enthusiasm/Spirit/Cooperation with the audience.



Slide # 11

EASY STEPS TO CREATE GREAT STORY TELLING

- Create a thirst or curiosity.
- Make your storytelling “big” or “small”.
- Take full control of facial expression.
- Talk with hands
- Create a storytelling atmosphere.
- Win the audience with the first line.
- Tell the story with feeling
- Involve the audience in the story .
- Slow down at the ending .

(Haven & Ducey, 2007).



Slide #12

HOW TO Tell STORIES?

- Engage your audience
- Build the scene
- Build and release tension
- Focus on what's logical
- Keep the flow logical
- Make it feel conclusive.



Slide #13

STORYTELLING and INSTRUCTION

Storytellers on Tour

- Have students practice retelling folktales in their classroom.
- When students feel confident, teams of three or four students at a time can then take their tales to other classes for a storytelling concert.
- If older students are sent to the younger grades, ask the younger grades to thank the storytellers with drawings inspired by their stories.



Slide # 14

Storytelling And Instruction

A Story Treasure Hunt

- A class selects a well-known fable or folktale.
- The plot is simplified into a sequence of events that can be transcribed onto cards with short sections of the tale on each.
- Students hide the cards out of sequence throughout the school or classroom. A treasure map showing the exact location where all the cards are hidden, is given to another class (Or, with clues, one card can lead to the next).
- Groups of students must find the cards and assemble them in correct order. The treasure is finding the WHOLE story.
- Two classes can trade treasure hunts by putting the stories on two different-colored cards.
- The treasure hunts can go on simultaneously and, when each class has found the other's story, they confirm it by assembling it, learning the plot and sending representatives to retell it, or to act it out as a skit to the other class.

Slide # 15

STORY TELLING AND INSTRUCTION

Story Circle

- One person begins a tale and stops after a few sentences.
- The next person picks up the story thread and continues it, then stops.
- The next person adds to it and so on until the tale comes to a resolution.
- The story could begin with a pre-selected title or subject to guide the improvisation.
- Try recording the story circle on a tape recorder for later listening.



Slide #16

CONCLUSION

We develop stronger memories for the events of our lives when we learn to convert our events into meaningful stories.

One good story always leads to another point of view,
another adventure,
 another image,
 another voice,
 another song,
 another place,
 another time. (Taberski, 2000, p. 13)

Slide # 17

CONCLUSION

- Storytelling can touch on all skills in language development
- It fun, creative and very effective
- Involves the use of the whole body (MI)
- Holistic teaching method
- Storytelling method provides huge space for fantasy and creativity.
- All language skills, functions and structures may be taught by stories.
- Storytelling method is an important teaching technique.
- Stories guide a human for his or her whole life and use them when the human learn his or her mother tongue. Consequently it is natural to learn a language with the help of stories.

Slide # 18

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